

ELECTION TO MEMBERSHIP IN THE  
AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY

The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of the American Chemical Society deems it essential to make the following statement in respect to the rejection in 1953 of the application for membership made by a foreign chemist. The statement is made solely because associates of the rejected applicant and others have sought since the rejection to impugn the motives of the Society and more directly those of its Admissions Committee in respect to the action taken by the Committee. The matter was carefully reviewed by the Board of Directors at its meeting December 5 and 6, 1953, and the action of the Committee sustained.

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The American Chemical Society has never announced either the name of any person whose application for membership in the Society has not been approved or the reasons for nonapproval of any such application.

Membership in the Society is a privilege, not a right. Nothing in the Charter, Constitution, or Bylaws requires the Admissions Committee to approve an application for membership solely because the applicant meets certain scientific standards. Professional and personal ethics, intellectual integrity, and, above all, intellectual freedom are just as essential as scientific attainment.

The falsification of educational records, the making of untrue reports of scientific results, the conviction on a charge of felony or treason, and activities in connection with an organization which advocates overthrow of government by violence are among reasons for denying an application whatever the scientific achievements of the applicant may be.

On the other hand, race, creed, color, nationality, and political beliefs have never been considered in connection with an application for membership. Active participation in the Communist program can not be construed as simply a "political belief".

Support of and compliance with the objects of the American Chemical Society as specified in its Charter are in conflict with the tenets of the Communist party as enforced by the discipline exercised over its members.

As was recently said by the president of one of our great American universities,

A Communist scholar is a contradiction in terms; he is irresponsible because he has given up all pretense of objectivity of intellectual inquiry. He is a fraud, and he has no place in a society of scholars.

Consequently, in denying membership to a Communist with adequate scientific accomplishments, the Admissions Committee has set no political standards for membership but rather has said that those who belong to the

American Chemical Society must be free to think as they wish, to report scientific results as honestly obtained, and to base thereon such theories as can be soundly developed.

The Admissions Committee of this Society when it took action on the application of an avowed Communist last year was fully advised as to the record and the activities of the applicant. In its opinion, concurred in by the Board of Directors of this Society, the applicant was not eligible for membership in the Society and cannot become eligible for membership while engaged in such activities and subject to party discipline.

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